

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE D-23

NEW YORK TIMES
24 JUNE 1982

Reagan Signs Agents Measure

WASHINGTON, June 23 (AP) — President Reagan, calling agents of the Central Intelligence Agency the "heroes of a grim twilight struggle," signed into law today a bill that would make it a crime to disclose the names of covert American intelligence agents.

Officials of the American Civil Liberties Union immediately denounced the legislation as blatantly unconstitutional and offered legal assistance to challenge it.

Mr. Reagan flew by helicopter to the sprawling C.I.A. complex in nearby Langley, Va., to sign the bill in front of an audience of several thousand agency employees sitting on a sun-drenched lawn.

Inside the headquarters, he also gave a private pep talk to clandestine employees the agency did not want to be seen by the press.

The bill made it a crime to disclose the name of a covert intelligence agent

even if the information is obtained from public records. It provided penalties of up to 10 years in jail and \$50,000 in fines for Government employees who expose the identities of covert United States intelligence agents living in foreign countries, and lesser penalties for those outside Government, including reporters and scholars.

Because of criticism of the bill as it was being shaped in Congress, Senate and House negotiators drafted a report saying it was not designed to discourage legitimate journalistic investigation and criticism of U.S. intelligence.